

HELP ?

A prologue for the 21st century

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Abstract:

Attendees at the Naval War College's 1998 Current Strategy Forum received a welcome update on today's sea services, but learned even more about the Navy after the next one.

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[Headnote]

NWC's 49th CSF: A Forum of Excellence



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Helicopters—such as this SH-60 Seahawk shown operating from the Kitty Hawk-class aircraft carrier USS Constellation—will remain an important asset in maintaining maritime dominance.

High-ranking military officers and civilian leaders from all walks of life gathered together at the U.S. Naval War College (NWC) in mid-June for the 49th Current Strategy Forum to discuss global stability and **economic** interdependence and what those abstract terms mean for the U.S. Navy.

Under Secretary of the Navy Jerry MacArthur Hultin and Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jay L. Johnson both stressed the need for the United States to remain engaged internationally, but disavowed the idea of this nation acting as the respondent for all 911 calls.

"We cannot be the world's policeman, nor should we intervene everywhere, but we can and will be prepared to engage where this nation's critical interests and values are at stake, and where such an intervention will make a difference," Johnson said at the NWC Forum in Newport, R.I.

Hultin, striking a similar note, told the overflow Forum audience: "If we exert our leadership and take an active part in shaping this new world, then we can make America and the world safer and more prosperous," he asserted. "If we withdraw into ourselves and fail to lead, then the threats will multiply, the opportunities for peace and stability will diminish, and our own continued prosperity will be in jeopardy."

Contending that America cannot, without ultimately hurting itself, withdraw from its role as the world's only superpower, the under secretary said that, to cite but one example, U.S./ NATO inability to control ethnic strife in Bosnia and/or Kosovo could result in a war that would engulf the Balkans and perhaps cost American lives and threaten U.S. interests.

"Am I saying that the United States must do everything?" he asked. "No. We cannot and should not try to play the world's policeman."

The prolonged crises in Bosnia and Kosovo are, of course, problems for the United Nations to handle. There is no indication that either the Clinton administration or the Republican-controlled Congress would support any unilateral role for the United States in either area.

The Active-Engagement Prerequisite

Johnson asked rhetorically how the Navy can add to the regional stability from which prosperity and peaceful change are most likely to develop. He said the answer requires two things: First, for the Navy to be actively engaged, helping to shape the peacetime environment with forward-deployed forces that act as a deterrent across the spectrum of operations from peacekeeping to the outbreak of a major theater war. Second, for the Navy to continue evolving and refining the way it thinks about waging war "... From the Sea." in a manner that harnesses information-age technology and applies it to the 21 st-century threat.

Johnson said that there currently are four principal areas of focus in the continuing evolution: network-centric warfare, land-attack operations, theater ballistic missile defense, and mine warfare.

"We are leveraging the explosion of information technologies to enable a fundamental change in the way our Navy will operate in the 21st century," he said. "It's called network-centric warfare, and it may be the most dramatic change in naval warfare since the advent of carrier aviation.

"By netting sensors and shooters in a seamless information and battle-management grid, we will achieve dominant battlefield awareness and, by combining forward presence with network-centric combat power, we will close timelines, decisively alter initial conditions, and head off undesired events before they start, locking out our adversaries' options and locking in our success."

High-Tempo Reality

The unprecedented "speed of command" made possible through network-centric warfare, according to the CNO, will give the U.S. Navy the ability to collect information rapidly, assess the combat situation as it develops, decide on a course of action, and execute that plan with overwhelming effect.

"We will apply combat power in a high-tempo continuum, not in incremental steps, to keep the enemy disoriented, reactive, unable to take the initiative or to carry out a coherent plan of action," he said. "Network-centric warfare is an exciting reality."

It is probably no coincidence, in the context of Johnson's comments, that Vice Adm. Arthur K. Cebrowski, the Navy "godfather" of network-centric warfare, has reported in as the new president of the Naval War College; he succeeded Rear Adm. James R. Stark on 24 July. Stark retired after three highly successful years as NWC president.

In the future, the Navy's purpose will be not only to maintain maritime dominance, but also to be able to influence events ashore, "directly, decisively, anytime, anywhere," according to Johnson. "Land attack, through distributed offensive firepower, will enable a smaller fleet to deliver greater amounts of combat punch," he said.

The CNO noted that the Navy's procurement plan reflects a strong commitment to the land-attack mission. Here he mentioned the F-A/18E/F Super Hornet strike fighter, the planned land-attack destroyer, and the New Attack Submarine (NSSN), which will be heavily armed with Tomahawk cruise missiles.

"With our sister service, the Marine Corps, we are investing in the amphibious ready group of the future, influencing events ashore in a more traditional manner-the landing of embarked Marines," he said. "From the AAV [advanced amphibious assault vehicle] to the V-22 Osprey [tiltrotor aircraft] to the LPD-17 class of amphibious ships, our amphibious forces in the next century will bring significant power '... From the Sea.'"

The AAV has been in development for more years than Marines care to remember. The first operational copies of this versatile ship-to-shore vehicle, which is the USMC's number one ground-acquisition priority, are now scheduled to be delivered to the Marine Corps in 2006.

TBMD IOC: ASAP

There is no IOC (initial operational capability) date set for the Navy's theater ballistic missile defense (TBMD) systems, which will exploit the capabilities of the SPY-1 phased-array radar and Aegis weapons system, combined with future variants of the Standard missile and CEC (cooperative engagement capability) systems. Johnson promised an accurate, affordable, and deployable TBMD system by the early part of the next century. "Beginning with areawide and progressing to theater capability, we will provide our forces, friends, and allies with a realistic defense against proliferating weapons of mass destruction," he said.

"We have a plan to put TBMD to sea, and we are committed to fielding it as soon as our testing system says it's ready. The early successes we have enjoyed in the areawide program predict continued success for this most essential capability."

The fourth area of evolution cited by the CNO is mine warfare. Mines plagued navies for more than a hundred years, Johnson said, and are still a serious threat. He said that the focus of the future in mine countermeasures (MCM) will be to move the assets forward as organic components of the battlegroup.

"I'm talking about a remote minehunting system on our Arleigh Burkeclass [Aegis guided-missile] destroyers and on all of the land-attack destroyers," he said. "I'm talking about the long-term mine reconnaissance system we'll put on the New Attack Submarine-providing the battlegroup with its only covert, nonprovocative mine countermeasure system. I'm talking about the full range of airborne mine countermeasures systems, all of which will be employed by the H-60 [helicopter] airframes, deployable on virtually every deck in the battlegroup and the amphibious ready group."

After decades of neglect, mine warfare has in recent years gained the close attention of U.S. Navy leaders. Johnson promised that the MCM mission now will be considered as fundamental to the required operational capabilities of the battlegroup as strike warfare and air warfare are today.

Undoubtedly thinking of the serious damage caused to two U.S. Navy ships during the Gulf War of 1991 and the impact that Iraqi mines had on the strategic and tactical decisions about the role that could be assigned to a shipborne brigade of Marines, Johnson said: "If we are going to dominate in the littorals as we do on the open ocean, it will require a new approach to the way we conceive of mine warfare."

Major NWC Reorganization

The CNO also told attendees at the Current Strategy Forum that a new organization will be established this summer in Newport. The Naval War College will be reorganized and, as noted above, headed by a three-star admiral.

The Naval Doctrine Command in Norfolk will be disestablished and a new Naval Warfare Development Command (NWDC) created as part of the NWC. Stark is given much of the credit not only for the creation of the NWDC, but also for construction of the NWC's new Strategic Maritime Research Center.

The NWDC will be headed by a rear admiral who will be responsible for concept innovation, doctrine development, and fleet battle experiment planning and evaluation. In addition, a rear admiral provost at the college will be assigned to direct all academic efforts and wargaming.



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A Boeing F/A-18F Super Hornet is shown during the type's first carrier landing on board the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS John C. Stennis. The Super Hornet reflects the Navy's commitment to the land-attack mission.

Johnson pointed out that the new organization will bring all the key players together in one place where strategy, doctrine, innovation, and experimentation can be most effectively coordinated.

Radical and Painful Success Story

Just as Johnson and Gen. Charles C. Krulak, commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps, are pursuing a revolution in naval affairs, the Navy's current secretariat has, in Hultin's world, "launched a revolution" in business affairs.

Every secretary of defense since James V. Forrestal, a former secretary of the Navy, and the first person to serve as secretary of defense since that post was established more than 50 years ago, has vowed to "streamline" the Pentagon to make it more efficient, to reform its acquisition processes, and to make it generally more manageable. But very few have managed to do so.

Now the current Department of Defense leadership is determined to take some pointers from the American business sector, which has had great success by exploiting information-age technology to put U.S. industry in the best position to benefit from the increasing globalization of the economy.

"They went through a painful assessment," Hultin said of the companies in the private sector. "They knew that, if they did not make radical changes, they would lose out to overseas competition. They broke with the past. They created a revolution that is the envy of the world."

He noted that Chrysler reduced the time to design and roll out a new car from over three years to less than 12 months. "Yet we in the Department of Defense take 10 years or more to design and manufacture a new aircraft, and 15 years for a new ship. That is just not acceptable. We in the Navy and Defense struggle along with an antiquated computer system in procurement that increases costs and delays decisions. Our financial statements are fed by more than 180 different computer systems. That, too, has got to go."

Security Vs. Entitlements?

Lt. Gen. Martin R. Steele, the Marine Corps' deputy chief of staff for plans, policies, and operations, who also addressed the Forum, provided a frank assessment of what he sees as the very serious budgetary problems facing all of the nation's armed services.

"Sooner or later, both the Congress and the services, Marines included, must confront the fact that we can no longer sustain and modernize the force structure and operate at the tempo and across the geography of our entire planet, forward-deployed, ready not only to respond to crisis, but also ready to help ensure **economic** vitality, stability, and security at current budget levels," he said.

Senior Department of Defense civilian officials, of course, continue to insist, as does the White House, that the U.S. armed forces are manned and equipped to carry out the stated national strategy of fighting and winning two "nearly simultaneous" major regional conflicts.

But it is most unlikely, as Steele also observed, that the services will receive increased appropriations in the current "balanced budget" environment. "We are in a zero budget game," he asserted. "Any congressionally directed increases to any particular program or service topline will result in a like decrement somewhere else," he said.

Grim Outlook for the Future

One of the key factors in the downhold on military spending, of course, is the persistent pressure for the expansion of civilian "entitlement" programs. In any case, the end result, in Steele's view, is that the services will be forced to contend with even smaller budgets in the future.



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Mines-like this Iraqi mine recovered from the Persian Gulf in 1992-remain a serious threat to navies. The CNO's focus in mine countermeasures will be to make mine warfare, both offensive and defensive, organic to the battle group.

"The military is getting smaller and yet it is being asked to do more," Steele said. "The bottom line is that General Krulak [Marine Corps Commandant Gen. Charles C. Krulak] knows that we can neither afford the Marine Corps we have now, nor the Marine Corps we will need in the future.

"We can either stick our heads in the sand and deny this simple fact, or we can pridefully assume that we-and only we-will benefit from large increases in our topline.

"Instead, the Corps has embraced the dragon of change and is riding the dragon. In fact, the Marine Corps process for preparing for the future is called 'Sea Dragon,' a five-year experimental effort."

Steele noted that Krulak has devoted considerable time to conceptualizing a "combined-arms approach" to maintain a national power-projection capability. That approach is based on the idea of building "deep coalitions" among interested partners both inside and outside the U.S. government as well as among allies and nongovernmental/private sector organizations in business and academia.

How can this be done? Steele's answer: through both leadership and honesty in facing the global security environment. "There is a need for leadership in bringing all elements of national power together to endure, and ensure, security and prosperity well into the next century," he said. "Leadership is at the crux of this strategy."

Steele said that the Marine Corps believes that a truly "national" response is needed for crises to which the United States currently sends only a military force. It is Krulak's view, he said, that a "national task force" representing all government agencies-as well as such nongovernment actors as academia, private-sector businesses, and relief organizations-should be called on to offer their special capabilities and expertise to resolve crises that are increasingly multidimensional in nature.

Fallout from a Crisis

Several Forum speakers discussed the implications of the critical **economic** problems now besetting a number of Asian countries, most notably Japan, Indonesia, Thailand, and South Korea.

Robert B. Zoellick, a former deputy secretary of state and currently a professor at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md., sees as one of the striking features of Asia's crises the different responses by Japan and China.

"Japan is viewed as failing the test of leadership, and China is seen, so far, as advancing its stature," he said. "If these conditions persist, the financial crisis may have signaled a change in the relative long-term influence of the two great Asian powers."

Although he spoke to the Forum several weeks before Prime Minister Hashimoto of Japan resigned for his admitted failings in leadership, Zoellick appeared to hit the nail on the head when he said, "The Japanese public's cynicism and loss of confidence makes standard **economic** policy or responses far less effective. As a result, only radical policy options are now likely to be credible, raising the risk of further yen depreciation that could generate another wave of financial contagion."

On the other hand, he continued, China has enhanced its influence over the past year by such actions as contributing \$1 billion to the bailout of Thailand and support of the Hong Kong dollar peg.

The Asian crisis has led to a slight raising of trade barriers elsewhere, according to Zoellick. "As the full impact of Asian devaluations and recessions is felt in other markets, protectionist sentiments will be on the rise," he said.

"In this context, the absence of U.S. trade liberalization initiatives is telling. The president's failure to press effectively for fast-track negotiating authority has imposed a heavy cost.

"As the growing U.S. trade deficit becomes a domestic political target, President Clinton is likely to find himself increasingly on the defensive. Given America's extraordinary strength, the inability of the United States to follow through on its trade rhetoric raises understandable doubts in other countries."



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The 24 July change of command at the Naval War College reflected the CNO's reorganization of the college, putting a vice admiral in charge and expanding the role of the college. Pictured here at the change of command are (left to right) outgoing president Rear Adm. James R. Stark, incoming president Vice Adm. Arthur K. Cebrowski, and Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jay L. Johnson.

Although America's security commitment to East Asia is firm, the challenge for the United States will be to adapt its relationships in the face of other changes almost certain to come, Zoellick asserted.

"Most important will be the overhaul of the U.S.-Japan security agreement, an alliance with Korea that will last beyond unification, and a framework with China that encourages cooperative ties but can safeguard against a China that might choose a different path," he said. Zoellick said he believes that President Clinton may have missed an opportunity to shape the Asia-Pacific trading landscape for perhaps decades to come. "And his tactical response to great upheavals in international capital markets and to questions about the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) role have left the IMF adrift in stormy seas," he also said.

Another top Forum speaker, Adm. Joseph W. Prueher, U.S. commander in chief Pacific, said he sees the **economic** crisis in Asia as "really a security crisis." In his opinion, it may be years before Asia fully recovers from the current **economic** turmoil.

China, with its huge population (1.32 billion people), increased military strength, and rapidly growing economy, is "not particularly threatening for us today," Prueher said; he said that the Pacific Command is eager to build "good relations" with the Chinese military.

Prueher said that he sees the following as among the most important missions for America in Asia: the preservation of close ties with Japan; the creation of conditions for a reconciliation between the two Koreas; improving relations with India; and playing a major role in helping the area deal with its **economic** crisis.

Replying to a question from the audience, Prueher described the loss of the giant U.S. **naval** base at Subic Bay in the Philippines as "a strategic blow" to the United States. "It cost us a lot in terms of [**forward** military] **presence**," he added.M

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